

**HB 331**

RESOLUTION 2008 - 18

**FOOD SERVICE INSPECTION FEES**

It is the intent of the Montana Association of Counties to support legislative efforts to increase public health inspection fees and to encourage the examination of establishing fees through a local, public rule-making process.

**WHEREAS**, food-borne illness kills over 5,000 people each year and is cause for the hospitalization of over 350,000. The public health inspections of food establishments is a vital component to reducing death and illness related to food-borne disease; and

**WHEREAS**, Montana's counties are critical partners in the state mandate to inspect such establishments; and

**WHEREAS**, licensing fees cover a small fraction of the costs of inspection; and

**WHEREAS**, the remaining costs are borne either by local property taxpayers or by decreasing other important local public health services; and,

**WHEREAS**, the current method of establishing such fees in statute is ineffective and inefficient.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Montana Association of Counties support efforts to increase the fees so as to reduce the property tax subsidy of the inspections; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Montana Association of Counties support efforts to examine the feasibility and practicality of establishing fees through a state or local rule-making process that more fairly and accurately reflect the actual cost of performing inspections.

**SPONSOR:** DISTRICTS 10 & 11

**RECOMMENDATION:** Do Pass

**PRIORITY:** High

**REFERRED TO:** Health & Human Services Committee

**ADOPTED:** Annual Conference, Hamilton, MT September 24, 2008